

DISCOMFITURE OF
POKER SHARPS BY
SHREWD LOOKER-ON

Trap Was Set for Him,
But It Failed to
Work Right.

HE SHARED IN ONE BET

Holder of Four Aces Aston-
ished to Find That He
Still Had Them.

"THE strangest and most excit-
ing incident I ever witnessed
in all the high play I have
seen on the river," said an old
Mississippi steamboat captain, "occurred
one night during a trip we were
making to St. Louis very shortly before
the breaking out of the war. He had
on board the usual crowd of planters,
merchants, gamblers, and miscellaneous
travelers from the city, and every night
the social hall was pretty well filled
with poker tables. I was chief clerk
of our boat at the time, and on the
evening I have in mind I had taken a
seat near the office to have a quiet
smoke, when my attention was at-
tracted by three men at an adjoining
table. Two of them I knew very well.
They were professional gamblers, who
traveled regularly up and down the
river and had the reputation of being
as smooth a pair of pasteboard manip-
ulators as could be found in the busi-
ness. The third man was a stranger to
me, and I put him down mentally as
a dupe. I never saw him after that
night, but I remember him with perfect
distinctness. He was about 35 years
high, slender, with very broad shoulders,
and had a dark, lean, smooth-
shaven face of rather attractive appear-
ance. I was a little puzzled to 'size
him up,' but finally concluded he was a
merchant from some small town in
the interior. From where I sat I could
easily overhear the conversation of the
group, and, knowing it was against our
policy to interfere, the gamblers paid
no attention to me.

He Begged to Be Excused.

"After a little general talk they pro-
posed a game of poker, but the dark
man begged to be excused. He said he
very seldom played the game, and did
not feel in the mood. In spite of all
their pressing, he politely but firmly
declined. 'Perhaps, then, you wouldn't
mind looking on,' said one of the gam-
blers at last, 'while I entertain my
friend here for half an hour or so.'
I would enjoy it, he replied courte-
ously, and the two sharps began to
plot what would be known as a 'freeze-
out.' By that time my interest was
strongly excited, for I knew, of course,
that some scheme was afoot to fleece
the stranger, and from prior experience
I even had a general idea of what was
coming.

"Both players bet heavily," continued
the captain, "and one of them, who sat
directly in front of the dark man, was
presently more than \$500 loser. A mo-
ment later two big hands were appar-
ently dealt. At any rate, there was a
swift interchange of betting and raising
before the draw that put perhaps \$150
on the table when the sharper on the
opposite side hoisted the pot \$100 more.
At that his companion made the fea-
ture of chagrin. 'I'd see your hundred
with pleasure,' he said, in a tone of bit-
ter annoyance, 'but I have less than \$40
in my pocket. Hold!' he added, as if
struck by an afterthought; 'perhaps
you will allow me to show my hand to
our friend. You may if you like.'
The other man, indifferently, and he passed
the cards to the stranger, who was lean-
ing forward, evidently deeply in-
terested.

Hand Contained Four Aces.

"The hand, as I could see, contained
four aces and six of clubs. The dark
man passed them without discom-
fiting them, and the gambler imme-
diately laid them face down on the ta-
ble. 'How would you like to back me
and go halves on that?' he asked. 'If
your friend is willing,' said the stranger
deliberately. 'I have no objection,' said
the other man, and the stranger counted
out and handed over \$100 in bills. The
gambler to whom the lot was made
threw \$200 in the pot. 'I see your bet
and raise you a hundred,' he said. 'I
see it,' said the other, and now suppose
we stop this fooling and draw cards!'
The big hand was dealt, and the dark
man, without looking at it, laid down
the table, and, without looking at it,
the gambler pushed aside the cards on
the extreme right. It was an old, cheap
trick, and I knew perfectly well he was
discarding one of his aces, so as to
lose to his confederate, and would
claim later that he had lost by accident.
His companion dealt him three cards and
took one himself. 'Now I raise you
\$800,' said the one who held the aces,
putting the rest of the stranger's money
in the pot. 'I call you,' replied the
other, counting out the cash. Then an
amazing thing happened. 'I have
four aces,' said the gambler, and
began to turn over his cards one by one.
By the eternal that was exactly what
he had! He was confident, of course,
that he had discarded one of them, and
was all prepared to yell: 'Merciful
heavens! I threw away one of my aces
by mistake!' But here were all four
staring him in the face.

Fell Out of His Chair.

"The other blackleg, who had four
kings, fell out of his chair, and before
they could recover from their amaze-
ment the dark man was on his feet. 'We
seem to have won,' he said coolly to the
gambler he had staked; 'let us divide
the spoils.' With that he counted over
the \$1,000, put it in his pocket and split
the balance, making his share, as I re-
member it, about \$500. The faces of the
two gamblers were a study, but there
was something so indescribably menac-
ing in the man's look, and they were so
clearly outwitted, that they offered no
objection. He then bade them an ironi-
cal good-night and disappeared to his
cabin. He got off before morning at a
plantation landing, and I learned long
afterward that he was a noted profes-
sional card sharp whose home was in
Baltimore.

"How did he do the trick? Well, the
best I can give you is my theory. I be-
lieve he substituted an ace for the six
spot when he examined his hand. The
gambler subsequently discarded an ace
all right enough, but, luckily for him,
he still had four left. If it wasn't done
that way, I give it up."

Amazing Record of Two Years
Slavery to Morphine.Confession of One Who
Became a Victim by
Accident.Drug Soaked He Drifts
Finally to Colony
of Wrecks.Eating of Blotters Is a
Weakness of One
Companion.

DOPE fiends are becoming more
numerous every day, the doc-
tors tell us. Especially is this
true among those of the more
refined classes who cannot resist the
temptation to free themselves from the
troubles of everyday life. They prefer
to forget their sorrows, the
dreams of opium, morphine and cocaine
rather than give themselves up to the
coarser joys of alcohol.

That there are many accidental vic-
tims of the dread drugs is also true.
One of these unfortunates, a former
member of New York's smart set, and
for two years a slave to King Mor-
phine, has made the following con-
fession:

"Nobody takes to morphine on pur-
pose. The little syringe and white tab-
lets do not appeal to one's curiosity as
does the strange looking pipe of the
opium smoker, with its accompanying
paraphernalia. Nor are there mor-
phine 'joints' to lure the neeker after
new sensations and induce him to have
a pipe 'just to see what it is like.'
No. In almost all cases the morphine
habit originated in some illness or
other. It was taken to relieve suffer-
ing, and was prescribed by a physician,
my own case, for instance, the fam-
ily doctor gave me the drug to keep
me from going insane—raving mad
with pain, as surely I should have done
had there been no relief. This relief
treatment continued, of necessity, for
several weeks, during which my nurses
gave me one-eighth of a grain four
times a day. At the end of those four
weeks I had become a 'fiend.' That
is the word which describes most ac-
curately a victim of the drug. It is
not elegant, but it is exact.

A Fiend Without Knowing It.

Of course, when the nurses shut me
off, stopped my daily allowance of mor-
phine, I began to suffer from the want
of it. I did not realize at first what
was the matter. I was as nervous as
twenty cats, and ached in spots all
over my body, particularly in my joints.
My knees suffered most, and at times
my limbs were beyond my control alto-
gether. As the days passed, oh, how
slowly, the pain grew worse until I
was suffering more than when I had lain
ill in bed. Then I bethought me of the
little syringe, and asked the nurses for it.
They said:

"Oh, you don't need that any more.
You'll be all right soon. You're nearly
well."
Nearly well! Perhaps I was, but if
getting well made me feel as I felt
then I should have preferred to be get-
ting ill. I began to feel as if I should
jump out of the window to kill myself if I
could not have an injection—just a little,
enough to harm, only to ease my nerves
and those fearful aching joints.

I was too weak to go out myself, so
I bribed a bell boy to get what I want-
ed—tubes with the little white tablets,
which are the morphine; a hypodermic
syringe with its slender needle, that
one may push through the skin without
leaving a mark if one be careful, and a
phial of distilled water in which to
dissolve the tablets.

I had watched the nurses so often as
they gave me my half a grain a day
that I knew just what to do. As soon
as I could get out of sight I dropped a
tablet, one-eighth of a grain, into a
half dozen drops of distilled water, drew
this up into the syringe and, then,
s-s-s-s-s into my thigh. Before I had
pulled the needle out I was in paradise.
Then I wrapped the syringe in a silk
handkerchief, stuffed it into my shoe for
safekeeping, climbed into bed and had
sweet slumber. When I awoke five
hours later I felt the need of another
"shot," and took it.

And so I began my journey along the
road that all morphine "fiends" travel,
whether they will or no, and upon
which, though one look carefully, one
finds few footprints pointing back.

There are exceptions to this rule, how-
ever, as to most rules, and for the ex-
ceptions I am thankful. Were there no
exceptions whatever to turn back I should
not be sitting here today writing these
remembrances. I should be with hun-
dreds of poor devils I have known—
in the beyond somewhere—I hope in
heaven. But during the two years that

I served the little syringe and tablets I
had my share of a "fiend's" experiences.
Drug Easily Obtained.

Before long I was able to dispense
with the bell boy's services. I could go
out and get the "dope" myself without
trouble, as one may easily enough in
any town of size—no questions asked
and no objection to the quantity asked
for. Chicago is the one exception that I
know of. There the "doper" must know
the ropes.

Among the many sorts of curses that
morphine proved itself to be to me there
was one blessing—at least my rhums
looked at it that way—I became regular.
I had never done anything regularly
before, so far as I can remember, but a
habit of punctuality appeared. I varied
hardly a minute each day in the time
of taking my injection. My first shot
was when I awoke in the morning and
reached out my hand for my master,
the little syringe, called the "gun,"
which always lay ready at my bedside
for the early morning "shot." Then on
through the day, at intervals of four
hours, till, with the last shot, I went
to sleep again, at 8:30 o'clock at night.
My sensitiveness to this regularity was
so developed that I could tell what o'clock
it was without looking at my watch.
My nerves were "keeping cases" on
the minutes as they sped—I had almost
said so "the seconds."

Increasing the Doses.

The one exception to this regularity
was the amount of morphine I took at
one "shot." I did not increase the fre-
quency of the injections during the first
few months—once in four hours was the
fixed schedule—but in the two years of
my fiend life the doses increased from
one-eighth part of one grain up to fif-
teen whole grains. The strength of
this fifteen-grain dose will be under-
stood when one recalls the fact that a
single grain, given hypodermically, is
quite enough to kill a person unaccus-
tomed to the drug.

In the early days of my gun habit the
principal effect of an injection was
sleep. It was not natural and peaceful
slumber, but rather a drowsy, dreamy,
semi-conscious state, fitful, variable.
For twenty minutes I would doze, and
then for ten minutes be wide awake—at
least I would think I was awake—but
in those days there were few things that
I could be sure of.

Awake or asleep I had a lighted cigar-
ette in my hand. It is a wonder that I
did not burn up, for often I set the bed
on fire. "Sheets burned" was a regu-
lar item on the hotel's weekly bill, and
the occasional addition of "quilts ditto."

I remember waking one night with a
sensation of heat about my legs. I
looked down casually and saw a rim of
fire smoldering around a hole in the
beddown quilt large enough for me to
crawl through. I poured ice water on
it from the pitcher I kept always at the
head of my bed. Then, semi-soaked, I
was soon asleep again as though nothing
had happened. What did I care? As I
learned for the ice water had I not
seen the little syringe on the chair at
my bedside, ready for action?

I think nothing could have startled me
or excited me unless it were the mis-

laying of my "gun." That would have
put me into forty fits at once, but I'll
tell about that later.

If I had known for a fact that \$100,000
was on the floor across the room, and
that it would be mine if I went over
and picked it up within the next fifteen
minutes I should not have budged. I
might have looked at it and thought
about it, but quite without longing. Why
should I bother for a million or a mil-
lion millions? The little gun was at
my bedside, and the tablets. What
could I care for anything? How could
I want for anything? Nor did I care
nor want until it was time for another
shot.

Drug-Soaked, Care-Free Idler.

So I smoked cigarettes—from fifty to
a hundred with hardly a pause ex-
cept for lighting—burned sheets and
quilts, scattered ashes, poured ice water
about and shot in dope day after day
and night after night, knowing not very
definitely where I was, and caring less.
Bed was too comfortable to be away
from long. I usually stayed until 2 to 4
o'clock in the afternoon, and would be
back in it again by 8:30 o'clock. Dress-
ing, even with my man's assistance,
was a serious and difficult business,
using up an hour and a half of my
not-in-bed time. When I was dressed
I called a landau, drove up to the
backward and along the river to the
end of the drive. There I would sit
and gaze at the Palisades and beckon
them to come to me that I might look
upon them closely and whisper to them.
Sometimes they would not come, but
often they would, and I would be
hugely pleased.

We did not drink together, the Palis-
ades, and I—at least nothing more than
tea, for I took upon spirits and wine,
either red or any other color, as dis-
tinctly vulgar. Why should men drink
I wondered, when the little syringe was
so much more refined and satisfying?
It puzzled me, and I would have pro-
tested with every "jag" I saw, but that
protesting would have worried me.

And so I led "the simple life," though
hardly the sort that Charles Wagner
would have approved. The days were all
alike, and for once, at least, I was liv-
ing within my income. I simply could
spend it all, the exertion would
have been too much. I did not know
that I was not spending everything that
was coming to me, as undoubtedly I
would have done had I been my normal
self.

So much for the first part of my ex-
periences. After some ten weeks the
dramatic inconsequential life of almost
absolute indifference began to pall on
me. "Sheets burned" was a regu-
lar item on the hotel's weekly bill, and
the occasional addition of "quilts ditto."

It was while in this condition that I
left my quarters in New York city and
went home. The family were frightened
at the sight of me, and sent for phys-

cians, but I would not see them. My
mother suspected that I was taking
some sort of drug, but I was cunning,
and for weeks no one could get abso-
lute proof. After a while I grew care-
less, and let my "gun" lie around where
any one might see it. So the folks
found me out and sent me to a san-
atorium.

A Museum of Wrecks.

There I was one of a colony of up-
ward of a hundred "fiends"—a sort of
museum of wrecks. Dante would have
had another hell to write about had
he looked in upon us; one more terrible
than even his imagination had con-
ceived of, and Nero, if he had known
the sufferings of a morphine victim
who is being cured would have aban-
doned his experiments with the rack
and used sanatoriums instead. Stretch-
ing on the rack would seem pleasant
pastime to the victim who was being
disappointed if compared with the agony
he suffers when deprived of the little
syringe.

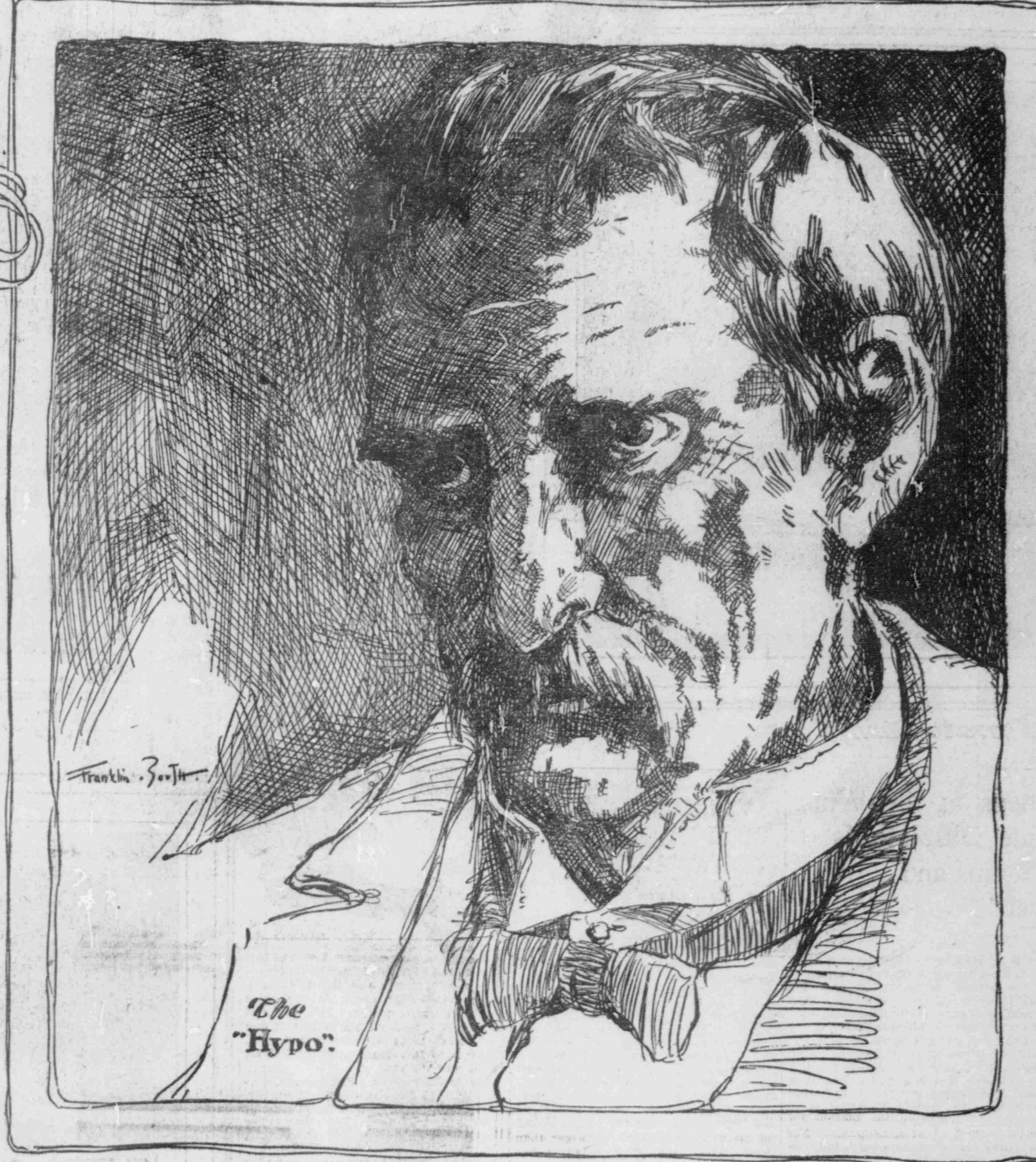
Nero might have established a "fiend
factory," and, having produced victims
sufficiently advanced in their addiction
to the drug, he could then have shut
them up in cages, safe from the possi-
bility of getting what they craved.
Perhaps what he would then have seen
would have satisfied even his keenness
for the study of suffering in others, for
he could see then the extreme limit of
human agony.

One fiend, whom I saw much of at
this sanatorium, had been taking daily
eighty grains of morphine, five grains
of apomorphine, five grains of strychnine,
and then had to use chloroform
in order to sleep. The ordinary dose of
strychnine, by the way, is one-sixteenth
of a grain. He always carried a knife,
and cut himself with it frequently and
on purpose. He said that he was after
bugs that he could see running about
under his skin. The physician in
charge told me that these patients
of the little syringe, I said "honestly,"
but I doubt if a "doper" is often abso-
lutely honest. His cunning tricks to
hoodwink his doctor and himself while
taking cures show him to be a Jekyll
and Hyde combination—a man who will
require much watching if the treatment
is to be of the slightest value to him.

The Cunning of the Fiend.

As anyone familiar with them knows,
"dopers" have many characteristics
more or less remarkable, generally
more. One characteristic of those who
go to sanatoriums to be cured is that
they try to prevent the cure. And they
do this in spite of the fact that they
wish to be well—desire earnestly and
honestly to be free from the domination
of the little syringe. I said "honestly,"
but I doubt if a "doper" is often abso-
lutely honest. His cunning tricks to
hoodwink his doctor and himself while
taking cures show him to be a Jekyll
and Hyde combination—a man who will
require much watching if the treatment
is to be of the slightest value to him.

This, of course, the sanatorium physi-
cians know, and the first thing they do
when a patient arrives is to search him
carefully. No custom-house official
searches more thoroughly. As likely as
not, it is the "doper's" first appear-
ance at a sanatorium, he has his cloth-
ing full of the drug—a morphine war-
house, as it were. But as he always
has to give up his own apparel and
wear the outfit the physician gives him
in exchange, this trick is of no avail.

HAVANA FUNERALS
WHICH BEDDED
TRAVELING MAN

Numerous Interments of
a Bishop Who Died
Long Ago.

WAS GREATLY BELOVED

Settled Contentment as to
Resting Place in Unique
Manner.

A TRAVELER who visited the Cu-
ban capital not so very long ago
brings home a story. One day
there passed his hotel—the An-
glatera—a funeral procession. Now in
Havana the catafalque is not, as with
us, a solemn affair in simple black. It
more resembles the callopo of a Bar-
num circus parade. It is decked out
in gilt and glitter. Its wheels are such
a sunburst. The reds and blues on its
body, the cloth of silver and of gold
that covers it, the precious stones that
flash from its sides, might make it a
prize float, a clothing house "exhibit"
in the founder's day pageants so fre-
quent in American country towns.

And this particular funeral was more
gorgeous, says the traveler, than the
usual thing in Havana. The mourners,
the drivers, the pallbearers, were ar-
ranged in costumes of the stage. The
traveler sauntered out to the curb. The
rest of it is in his own words:

"Who's dead?" I asked the hotel at-
tendant.
"The bishop of Havana, senior."
"But didn't know he had died. Hadn't
seen any notice of his demise in the
papers."
"The bishop of Havana has been dead
these many years, senior."

Had Been Dead Many Years.
I give the attendant's words their in-
tended sense, but not as he spoke them.
for his English was as bad as my Span-
ish. He smiled when he said the good
bishop had been dead many years, so I
thought he was having a bit of fun at a
stranger's expense, and I pressed the
subject no further. Instead, I walked
out to the cemetery on the east. There
I saw the tomb where the good bishop
lay in his last resting place. I sup-
posed—and then I walked around among
some of the ordinary family plots. Here
and there men were digging. New
graves? No; opening old graves. By
dint of "intervening" a number of the
grave-diggers I was finally able to piece
together the facts that the burial
customs in Cuba are almost as strange
as the Parsee customs and their towers
of silence in Bombay.

It seems that the reopening of graves
in Cuba is the result of a long-established
custom of burying as many bodies
as possible in a single grave. The ceme-
tery routine is something like this:
When the corpse is ready for burial, the
First, some one, usually the head of a
family, buys a plot. He at once sets to
work digging his own grave and graves
for all the members of his family. He
digs several graves six feet long for
adults, and one grave four feet long for
children, to provide for the possible death of a child.
When the entire area of the plot is thus
open graves, the grave-digger turns up
son, and plasterer. He cements each
grave, bottom and sides. Then he fills
in the cemented graves with soil and
goes home with the satisfactory thought
that he may look upon his own grave
during his lifetime, and that it is ready
for him at any time. He is at peace
with the world.

Weirdest Part of Custom.

But the weirdest part of this custom
is yet to be told. In the middle of the
plot a square grave is dug—a hole about
six feet square. This square hole is
cemented, like the graves, and filled in
with soil. It should be explained by the
way that the bodies in the graves are
covered with quicklime. When the flesh
has disappeared and only the bones are
left, the bones are taken out of the
grave and thrown into the square hole
in the center of the plot. Thus the
graves are used over and over again
until the square hole in the center is
filled with the bones of the members of
this or that family. Then the hole is
sealed over, and that particular family
plot is abandoned and a new one pur-
chased.

Six months afterward this same trav-
eler chanced to be in Havana again, and
again a refulgent funeral procession
passed the hotel. There was the same
splendor and the same glint of gold
and of jewel, the same riot of decora-
tion on the hearse. All was similar,
except that the procession moved to-
ward the other of Havana's two ceme-
teries.

"It's the Same Bishop, Senior."
"Who's dead?" I again inquired of
that same hotel attendant of six months
previously.

"The Bishop of Havana, senior."
"What? Another bishop? What
do you do to your bishops?"

"It's the same bishop, senior; the same
one who has been many years dead."
"How do you mean? Two funerals for
the same man?"

"No, senior. Fifty, sixty, hundred
funerals—for many, many times has the
bishop been buried."

The traveler applied to the highest au-
thority, to the hotel clerk, for a solu-
tion of the enigma.
"Ah, but it was so written in the will
of the bishop, senior," was the answer.
"He died many years ago, and he was
very much beloved here in Havana—and
even while he still lived contention
arose between the two sides of the city
as to where the bishop should be buried—
whether in the cemetery on the east or
the cemetery on the west. So, to end this
contention and to please both sides of
the city, the bishop willed that his
bones should rest half of each year in
the cemetery on the east and the other
half of the year in the cemetery on the
west. And he left a sum of money to
be used to pay the cost of disinterment
his bones every six months and to pay
for a public funeral each summer and
each winter. And we have been doing
this now for a great many years—for
the man who is buried twice a year."

IT FILLS THE BILL.
The Managing Editor—Yes, we want
you to take a good rest. You need it
badly. Go somewhere where you will
have absolutely no cares and nothing to
do.
The Faithful Attaché—All right. Make
your own arrangements in the Far
East.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

(Continued on Sixth Page, this section.)